

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) An isolated polynucleotide selected from the group consisting of (a) to (d) below:

(a) a polynucleotide comprising ~~a protein-coding region of the nucleotide sequence according to~~ from positions 58 to 1770 of SEQ ID NO: 1;

(b) a polynucleotide encoding a protein comprising the amino acid sequence ~~according to~~ of SEQ ID NO: 2;

(c) a polynucleotide encoding a protein comprising the amino acid sequence ~~according to~~ from positions 27 to 213 of SEQ ID NO: 2, wherein said polynucleotide comprises the nucleotide sequence ~~according to~~ from positions ~~58~~ 136 to 696 of SEQ ID NO: 1 and wherein the protein is a blood cell growth and differentiation factor; and

(d) a polynucleotide encoding a protein comprising the amino acid sequence ~~according to~~ from positions 27 to 213 of SEQ ID NO: 2 and wherein the protein is a blood cell growth and differentiation factor.

2 - 3. (Canceled)

4. (Original) A vector into which the polynucleotide according to claim 1 is inserted.

5. (Previously Presented) An isolated transformant comprising the polynucleotide according to claim 1.

6. (Previously Presented) A method for producing a protein comprising cultivating the transformant according to claim 5, under conditions sufficient for the production of the protein, and collecting the protein from the culture.

7 - 18. (Canceled)

19. (Previously Presented) An isolated transformant comprising the vector according to claim 4.

20. (Previously Presented) A method for producing a protein comprising cultivating the transformant according to claim 19, under conditions sufficient for the production of the protein, and collecting the protein from the culture.

21. (Currently Amended) An isolated polynucleotide encoding a protein comprising the amino acid sequence ~~according to~~ of SEQ ID NO: 2.

22. (Currently Amended) An isolated protein comprising the amino acid sequence ~~according to~~ of SEQ ID NO: 2.

23. (Canceled)

24. (Currently Amended) An isolated protein comprising the amino acid sequence ~~according to~~ from positions 27 to 213 of SEQ ID NO: 2 and wherein the isolated protein is a blood cell growth and differentiation factor.

25. (Previously Presented) A vector into which the polynucleotide according to claim 21 is inserted.

26. (Previously Presented) An isolated transformant comprising the polynucleotide according to claim 21.